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Whatever is the degree of determination of science—the questions it asks, the methods it uses—by its state of advancement, the choice of investigation cannot, according to Sen, be divorced from the values of the investigator, which means that the choice of problems might be affected by ethics. In other words, each intellectual production conveys a representation of the world, an *ideology*; the orientation and the style of the enquiries are marked by the character of the authors, their personal affinities and beliefs and the fortunes of life.

" (...) among the great variety of developments that have occurred in the twentieth century, I did not, ultimately, have any difficulty in choosing one as the preeminent development of the period: the rise of democracy." *-Amartya Kumar Sen*[1]

Indeed, two priorities can be identified in Sen's career, both connected to the idea that only enlightened democracy can achieve justice: upstream, developing his scientific competence and making his discipline evolve in a direction which corresponds better to his conception of the world; downstream, informing public opinion about his analyses and results. His faith in democracy motivated him to challenge Arrow's "impossibility theorem"[2], and has been a guiding line in his research in social choice theory as well as in his empirical analyses. He also wanted to change the perception that philosophy was "too remote from economics"[3], while economics had emerged as a part of moral science. This explains why Sen decided to study philosophy—including logic, epistemology as well as moral and political philosophy—in parallel with his research on social choice theory. Both related closely to his older concerns about democracy and equity[4].

And one cannot but be amazed by the large scope of his work. His contributions intend not only to renew normative economics but political philosophy as well, proposing another way than the Rawlsian way to apprehend justice. Calling economic orthodoxy into

question is not enough; Sen envisages calling philosophical orthodoxy into question too. But more basically, his obsession for enlarging the accessibility of his work must be understood as the will to sustain public debates and to create a dialogue between scientists and the population at large.

Sen is thus situated in a general perspective of history, but he could also act on this history and particularly on the history of thought. Sen considers that:

> Researching is an action and, like any other action, there is ultimately a question of its justification. The questions "how should I act? What should I do?" are critically evaluative ones in the choice of research actions, in the same way they are in other types of choices.[5]

He questions the meaning and motivations of scientific reasoning and the choice of problems to study. For him, these choices cannot be "value free", or divorced from the values of the investigator. This idea offers a clue to answer commentators who—disconcerted by the heterogeneity of Sen's contributions either in social choice theory, in moral or political philosophy, or in development economics—have contended that is was possible to analyze Sen's approach while ruling out one or another aspect of his work.

Two Traditions

Amartya Sen's philosophical approach is, as every political and scientific thought, a situated approach. His idea of justice, which is a proposition for a renewed theory of justice, emerges clearly from the debates provoked by the publication in 1971 of John Rawls' *Theory of Justice*[6]. While Rawls is a philosopher, his book has triggered the big comeback of the social justice issue in economics—an issue that had been somehow outshone by the domination, since the 1940s, of Paretian approaches in normative economics and the "taboo" of interpersonal utility comparisons[7]. Debates have centered on the measurement system to judge individual advantage and have concerned, on the one hand, the way to aggregate the information relative to this advantage and, on the other, the priority to give to some aspects of individual advantage. Sen has largely contributed to these debates, particularly by proposing the concept of "capability" that centers on individual life potentialities rather than incomes or resources. The idea is to estimate what individuals can do or be in society rather than what they have. He came to that concept as he was seeking a morally relevant dimension for normative exercises, which would go beyond utility and primary goods, which were both unsatisfactory. Utility was seen as a too subjective criterion on one's own welfare, and primary goods as too good-centered. Nevertheless, from Sen's first and well-known presentation of his capability approach, one could easily understand that the concept of "basic capabilities" was conceived as an extension of the Rawlsian concept of primary goods in a non-fetishist direction:

> The focus on basic capabilities can be seen as a natural extension of Rawls's concern with primary goods, shifting attention from goods to what goods do to

> human beings. [...] There are, of course, many difficulties with the notion of "basic capability equality." In particular, the problem of indexing the basic capability bundles is a serious one. It is, in many ways, a problem comparable with the indexing of primary good bundles in the context of Rawlsian equality. [...] Indeed, basic capability equality can be seen as essentially an extension of the Rawlsian approach in a non-fetishist direction.[8]

realization-focused comparative approaches

Since, Sen has been investigating on the implications and the demands of such a concept, but he has gone further. In his last book, *The Idea of Justice*, Sen advocates a comparative approach of justice that is a radical departure from a theory of justice in its accepted meaning. Indeed a theory of justice would supposedly propose aggregative or prescriptive principles, which Sen has always refused to specify—considering it as a matter of social choice to be constantly renewed. It is thus a radical departure from John Rawls' theory of justice. According to Sen, Rawls belongs to a tradition he calls "transcendental institutionalism" while Sen himself belongs to a tradition of "realization-focused comparative approaches". Both traditions have emerged in the Enlightenment period, but radically differ in their way of reasoning and in their object of reasoning. The first one was led by Hobbes and particularly developed by Locke, Rousseau and Kant; the other was pursued in various ways by Smith, Condorcet, Wollstonecraft, Bentham, Marx and Mill, among others. The first examines the nature of "the just" in order to find the perfect institutions; the other compares different social realizations and tries to find some criteria for one alternative being 'less unjust' than another. The first one is pure abstraction; the other is grounded in experience and observation. While the comparative approaches to which Sen refers are considerably more modest, they are thought to be more efficient to reduce injustice.

For Sen "transcendental institutionalism" overlooks some serious points. He identifies two problematic aspects of *transcendentalism: feasibility and redundancy*. This means that it is neither possible (*feasibility* aspect), nor useful (*redundancy* aspect) to reach a reasonable agreement on the nature of a "just society". It is more relevant to choose among the feasible alternatives, on the basis of practical reason. Moreover *institutionalism* is also problematic; an arrangement-focused view of justice is neither necessary nor sufficient to ensure justice. What is important is the impact of arrangements on individual behaviors and capabilities, on the lives people can lead. What is needed for the comparative approach that Sen promotes is a comprehensive search for social agreements through rankings of alternatives that can be realized, based on public reasoning.

In fact, procedures are crucial in Sen's thought. What must particularly be held under scrutiny in his view is the reasoning on which an ethical proposition is based and the acceptability of that way of reasoning. It relates closely to the issue of objectivity that, for Sen, refers to the ability to stand up to

open public reasoning, as it will reflect the impartial nature of the proposed positions and the arguments in their support. In this regard, Sen draws inspiration from Rawls: "a conception of objectivity must establish a public framework of thought sufficient for the concept of judgment to apply and for conclusions to be reached on the basis of reasons and evidence after discussion and due reflection."[9] This point cannot but strengthen Sen's idea since the 1960s according to which value judgments not only can be discussed but can evolve through discussion. And as the discussion also evolves with time, context or people involved in it, Sen opts for the social choice approach rather than that of the social contract. This way of thinking is at the heart of social choice theory which Sen traces back to Condorcet, while the formal discipline has emerged with Arrow (1951).

Sen's Loyalty to Social Choice Theory

Sen's philosophy is indeed also situated in a particular discipline: economics, and more precisely social choice theory, to which Sen dedicated his research since the early 1960s. Arrow's "possibility theorem" sparked off this particular and active field of investigation. It became quickly known as the "impossibility theorem" because of his devastating result: *"If we exclude the possibility of interpersonal comparisons of utility, then the only methods of passing from individual tastes to social preferences [...] which will be defined for a wide range of sets of individual orderings are either imposed or dictatorial"*[10]. In other words, it showed the difficulty of renouncing to interpersonal utility comparisons while aggregating individual preferences to reach a complete and consistent collective choice. According to Sen, this result involved: "(1) in politics, an extreme sacrifice of participatory decisions, and (2) in welfare economics, a gross inability to be sensitive to the heterogeneous interests of a diverse population"[11]. And Sen's resoluteness to contribute to social choice theory, and more generally to normative economics, seems to have originated from those implications.

One can wonder with Desai[12] why, when there were urgent problems of poverty, hunger and unemployment, was Sen so concerned about mathematical logic—including transitivity and symmetry—and utilitarianism's problems. But his interest in social choice theory would better be defined as a research for democratic procedures to ground just collective choices. The problem with this particular and active field of investigation is that its results and methods are hardly accessible to non-specialists. Sen is one of the few who has tried to show that the underlying reasoning is very close to the one of political philosophers who develop a comparative approach for justice. In fact, what he was really battling to establish was that social choice was of greater relevance to economics than some welfare economists seemed to think, as well as the necessity in modern economic theory for looking at moral and political philosophy. It is only forty years later that the ambitious architecture of Sen's economic thought has become clearly visible.

While Sen does not remain faithful to the Arrovian letter, he nevertheless follows

its spirit. The corollary of this "roundabout inspiration" is that one cannot understand some of Sen's theoretical choices without coming back to their Arrovian origins, which are sometimes well-hidden. A sign of Arrow's influence shows in Sen's particular reiteration of a collective choice approach *outside* social choice theory in a less systematic perspective, leaving room for indeterminate horizons.

In fact, Sen takes a united stand against two kinds of usual approach in economics: 1.against methodological individualism, he underlines the reality of individuals as social human beings; 2.against positivism and mechanist approaches, he stresses that human being exists, and more precisely co-exists, and that this co-existence is irreducible to a purely economical or mechanist reasoning. Far from a naïve view of human generosity, which would be that human beings would spontaneously act for the good of others, Sen's thought is on the contrary very influenced by powerful traces in his memory of conflicts between Hindu and Moslem communities[13]. The experience seems to have been devastating for the young Sen, and suddenly made him aware of the dangers of narrowly defined identities. In this regard, it is important to remark that he does not reduce individuals to their place or function within a given society, neither to a given culture or community. Individuals, in his view, transcend the sum of their social belongings. Ignoring the fact that people are always complex, multi-faceted individuals with plural social identity is, according to Sen, an interference with people's freedom to make their own choices and, thus, an obstacle to democracy.

So it is right to say that, in Sen's approach, the individual remains in the forefront as in any western philosophy. However it appears that the Sennian subject is not defined by a true understanding of what he or she is, but by an opening to what is not him or her. The individuals' consciousness does not come so much from introspective thinking, but deliberation with the other, which supposes taking into account the other's views and situations. At the same time, deliberation is not reduced to a discussion between "the I" and "the other", but consists also of a questioning of each one's environment—tending to make objective his own position in the world—and a discussion between "the I" and himself, intensified by the discussion with the other.

The possibility of choice, whether individual or collective, does exist only on the basis of this kind of deliberation, and with an acknowledgement of value and interest conflicts. Deliberation does not indeed necessarily entail a coincidence of interests or priorities, but it can highlight a disproportion of advantages according to some shared values. This statement requires surmounting divisions of class, gender, rank, location, religion, community, and other established barriers with which injustices are often linked. And from this statement, along with "an objective analysis of the contrast between what is happening and what could have happened" (Sen, 2010, p. 389), can emerge "responsibility". Undeniably, when disadvantage is clearly stated within a

public and open framework of though, it is then very hard to act as if one doesn't know.

Ultimately Sen's background in social choice theory has played a critical part in his way of considering social decisions, but he champions an ethics of democracy that goes far beyond a mere possibility for vote. Individual preferences still have some interest—unsurprisingly given Sen's attachment to democracy—but the only preferences to count are those which consider the other and are built with the other, through deliberation. He refuses the "disengaged tolerance" that has dominated normative economics in the twentieth century and has permitted avoiding reasoning and discussion about conflictive positions. He would rather refer to John Stuart Mill's idea of "a government by discussion", according to which democracy's success depends of the extent to which people's voices can be heard.

This view is maybe not disconnected from a shift in his work in the middle of the 1970s, orienting his research more and more toward empirical studies. At this time Sen was theoretically inspired by the critical contributions of Rawls on equity and Nozick on liberty[14], although he was already doubtful towards their "contractualist" approach and their way of seeing individual advantage. But his interest in equality and freedom has also been deeply influenced by his Indian experience and the lessons he has drawn from his analysis of famines and gender inequalities.

Sen's Influencial Indian Backround

One cannot forget that Sen is the son and grand-son of Indian intellectuals, close to the poet and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore. He chose to live and work in the most prestigious western university, certainly because it was the best way to obtain social and scientific recognition, but he keeps including in his writings references to his culture, and more lately to his Indian experience. For instance, while he claims his belonging to a tradition inherited from the European Enlightenment, Sen also emphasizes the similarity between his approach and "the long Indian tradition of seeing justice as *nyaya* (concentrating on comprehensive outcomes), rather than as *niti* (focusing on arrangements and institutions)"[15]. Indeed, to explain his partition of the different approaches of justice into two traditions which both have emerged in the Enlightenment period, Sen finds useful to invoke an old distinction from the Sanskrit literature on ethics and jurisprudence:

niti and *nyaya*

Consider two different words—*niti* and *nyaya*—both of which stand for justice in classical Sanskrit. Among the principal uses of the term niti are organizational propriety and behavioural correctness. In contrast with niti, the term nyaya stands for a comprehensive concept of realized justice. In that line of vision, the roles of institutions, rules and organization, important as they are, have to be assessed in the broader and more inclusive perspective of nyaya, which is inescapably linked with the world that actually emerges, not just the institutions or rules we happen to have.[16]

Thus Sen belongs to the international community of economists which implies his conforming to specific conventions and rules, but he seems to be aware that his origins have partly shaped his world vision. In what drives him, there is also a strong component of awareness of his privileged condition in a world with much poverty and inequality as well as the feeling that he owes something to others[17]. His education has persuaded him that it would be irrelevant to tackle those crucial issues directly without paying sufficient attention to the role of theorization.

In this regard, Sen outlines the influence Amiya Dasgupta[18], a colleague of his father, in his choice to study economic theory whereas he was quite sceptical of its impact and much more concerned with things that look immediately applicable and conspicuous in their relevance to the real world. Dasgupta made him aware that "one could make a terrible mistake, even in terms of any relevance for practical concerns, by going *too directly* at it". Sen was very concerned with politics, but he learnt from Dasgupta the crucial role that theorizing inevitably has to play in setting the problem right and in preparing for facing practical problems. In turn, economic theory has to be very concerned with the kind of problems that ultimately are important to people. He had also learnt from Dasgupta that being interested in practical Indian problems shouldn't mean rejecting western economic theory, but rather looking for what in any theory is relevant to the real world.

This perspective entails avoiding a double pitfall: 1. considering the world as "lying at his feet", that leads to the belief that one can grow away from the world, or govern it (philosophically speaking); 2. Intending to change the world immediately, which would be an ill-founded philosophical abstraction. Many years later, Sen's gratitude to Dasgupta appeared clearly in his essay *Poverty and Famines* as he dedicated it "to Amiya Dasgupta who introduced me to economics and taught me what it is about"[19]. There are two reasons for his gratitude to appear precisely in that book. First, there is a concentration on the kind of problems that really affect people in Asia or Africa, and that are neglected by standard economic theory. Second, Sen presents and uses there a theoretical approach that is different from the prevalent approach of hunger and famine and, according to him, more relevant.[20]

His work on famines—as well as his work on social identity or gender inequality—attests to another characteristic of Sen's thought: it is influenced by his life experience and Indian background. In a way, Sen is very close to Merleau Ponty, for whom "to the test of events, we acquaint ourselves with what is for us unacceptable and it is this interpreted experience which becomes thesis and policy"[21]. Sen's thought is indeed deeply rooted in the world as he knows it; in his books he faces events which made him feel a strong sense of injustice. And as an economist and philosopher he must go beyond a mere factual analysis, which led him to propose new frameworks of thought to analyze facts. In *Poverty and Famines*, he showed that famines were not due to a food shortage *per se*, but to

failures of entitlements to food for a part of a population. He could change the analysis of famines and the way of acting on it because of his working out of an *entitlement approach*—opposed to a *food-based approach* to starvation.

What is clear is that he still was driven by an instinctive sentiment of injustice experienced in his youth. It is now well known that he had been deeply shaken by the agony and outrage caused by the Great Bengal famine of 1943. Although he was a witness, and not a victim, this event really made an impression on him. When the Bengal famine occurred, Sen was a nine-year-old boy. He remembers he was allowed by his grand-father to give a cigarette tin of rice to anyone that came for help. But the main memory he has and prefers to focus on is, on the contrary, his feeling of helplessness and "bewilderment"[22]. Anyway, he then realized that no one in his family, nor any of his friends' families, were affected by the famine. And this quite transparent and brutal class-division has long sensitized him bitterly to the issue of inequality. Secondly, he knew from his parents that "the crop hadn't been bad in any sense so it was surprising that there would be a famine,"[23] which maybe later oriented him to postulate that the problem was not just about food. It can be presumed with some plausibility that the memories of that period did play a part in his enquiry, as well as the experience of feeling helpless in his choice to work on famines thirty years after. Analysis does not dispel nor cancel what "shaked" the thinker, but emotional shocks prompt him to think and to reason. This is the perfect illustration of Sen's will to reconcile sentiments and reason.

Here one can identify another Indian influence on Sen's way of thinking: Rabindranath Tagore. Sen has sometimes acknowledged this intellectual filiation and contrasted the common perception about Tagore in the West—a perception that overemphasized his mystical side. Though he didn't deny the immediate role of raw sentiments and unexamined affection, Tagore considered that reasoning had to be prior in every decision and action; as Sen described it:

> You ask yourself why you are doing it, what do you get out of it... Am I being sufficiently self-critical? Am I asking the right questions? Is this right for me? What will it do to other people, because we also belong to a world community? What do we owe to others and what do others owe to us? How do we relate to each other? One could say that Tagore's... techniques of analysis are more relevant than Gandhi, who was less concerned with reason in a very broad sense. To take into account affection and sentiments and emotions but at the same time subject them all to reasoned scrutiny. That is quintessential Tagore territory.[24]

This way of thinking inevitably brings to mind the outlook that Sen then developed concerning economic methodology, as it was presented in introduction. Tagore's reputation as a poet or mystic has often eclipsed his contributions to other fields, particularly to educational methods. He wanted his students to become universal men and women like himself and to overcome feelings of narrow nationalism. Whereas faith was more important

to Gandhi, reason and freedom were essential to Tagore. "Being free to determine what you want to do rather than being guided by tradition, received wisdom, was much more important to Tagore than it was for Gandhi."[25] He was also uncompromising in his belief that human beings could absorb quite different cultures in constructive ways:

> Whatever we understand and enjoy in human products instantly becomes ours, wherever they might have their origin. I am proud of my humanity when I can acknowledge the poets and artists of other countries as my own. Let me feel with unalloyed gladness that all the great glories of man are mine...[26]

Taking Sentiments Seriously: Return to the Smithian Tradition

It is right to say that Sen emphasizes the importance of reason and public debate in contrast to faith and unreasoned convictions—stressing that the value of reason is not quintessentially European or Western. Nevertheless, he does not ignore the role played by emotions, psychology or instincts in decision-making. Furthermore he considers it necessary to take them into account in our evaluations of justice or injustice. To strengthen his view of sentiments, Sen finds another fundamental support in Adam Smith's philosophical writings. Indeed, it is not from his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* that Sen draws his arguments, but from his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Sen sees there a proof that sentiments are important, and that it is possible to examine them in order to uncover local prejudices and preconceptions at their source. Smith has shown that instinctive reactions toward a specific conduct rely, more often implicitly, on our understanding of what leads to this conduct. First perceptions may indeed change "in response to critical examination, for example on the basis of causal empirical investigation that may show, Smith notes, that a certain 'object is the means of obtaining some other'."[27] Smith aimed at revealing the hypocrisy of the « good moral », or simply the absence of thinking about our sentiments, highlighting that wealth and greatness, abstracted from merit and virtue, almost constantly obtain our respect. « Self-love » takes then the form of « self-interest », economic motivation, materialist desires, but not without serious social cost. Bringing to light this fool's bargain concerning the virtues attributed to fortune was for Smith the means to bring about an evolution in mentalities, and thereby behaviors.

reason and public debate

In Sen's work, there is no particular theory regarding moral sentiments, but a will to examine their influence on our reasoning, and conversely to examine the influence—often implicit—of our reasoning on them. There is no "sentimentalism" here, but the idea of a reasoning that is not synonymous with "cold calculation", which is an indirect criticism of decision theories that see rationality as a mere maximization of utility. In other words, Sen urges us to acknowledge the complex relationship between reason and emotions, par-

ticularly in giving an important role to the Smithian notion of "sympathy". In contrast to his common image, Smith was not a defender of selfishness, as was Bernard Mandeville at that time. Far from what we now call "methodological individualism" (which tends to see individuals as *homo oeconomicus*), the Smithian subject desperately needs other people to forge his identity, given his desire to be approved in the sentiments and passions that motivate his acts.

Moreover, Sen sees in the "impartial spectator" imagined by Smith the means for each one to think about his own sentiments and actions' motives, by removing himself from his own natural station and endeavouring to view them at a certain distance from him. The longer the distance, the more "the most complete lesson of self-command"[28] will be learnt. But the longer the distance, the more it is difficult to put oneself in the position of other people and imagine how they are likely to view our sentiments and motives. Here comes the decisive part of discussion and confrontation of points of view. Sen goes even as far as considering that the Smithian reasoning requires taking interest in outsiders' point of view in order to go beyond the constraint of local conventions: "in the approach advanced by Adam Smith, invoking 'impartial spectators', distant voices may be given a very important place for their enlightenment relevance, for example to avoid parochialism of local perspectives."[29] Smith's "opened impartiality"—involving taking note of what is seen by 'the eyes of the rest of mankind'—is certainly even more necessary today in our present globalized world. At least, this is a useful argument for Sen to consider global justice, including issues like stopping terrorism across borders or thinking about human rights or economic crisis. In his opinion, sympathy can have significant scope and power in such debates, forcing one to think seriously about what can be done, rather than proceeding as if societies did not owe anything to each other. Here is a good starting point for a more comprehensive ethical reasoning—creating above all a moral obligation for thinking—but sympathy alone cannot replace practical reasoning.

Consequently Sen belongs to a tradition of economists largely described by Emma Rothschild, his wife, in *Economic Sentiments*, including particularly Adam Smith and Condorcet. For Rothschild, the indefinite idea of a sentiment—as a feeling of which one is conscious and on which one reflects—was at the heart of Smith's and Condorcet's political and moral theory. For these authors, sentiments were "events that connected the individual to the larger relationships in which he or she lived (the society, or the family, or the state)."[30] While Sen keeps away from David Hume for whom passion was probably more powerful than reason, he nonetheless criticizes the authors who based their theories exclusively on reason among whom he seems to put Kant and Diderot, addressing without doubt indirectly his contemporaries.

Within the framework of an approach to justice that does not confine itself to institutions, but gives an equally important role to behavioral characteristics and social interac-

tions, it is thus necessary to take interest in emotions because they are often at the source of behaviors. Sen stresses, quoting Charles Dickens, "there is nothing so finely perceived and finely felt, as injustice."[31] Instinctive reactions have something to say, while it is crucial that they do not have the last word. The importance of emotions can be appreciated within the reach of reason, in particular by deliberating on the motives involved.

Conclusion

Sen's idea of justice invites us to speak another language than the language of mere self-interest, to revive the grammar of our moral sentiments, in order to give way to the theoretical dignity of solidarity, social commitment and impartiality understood as disinterestedness. This suggestion contrasts with James Buchanan's proposal of "A Politics without romance", a rational choice theory in which value judgments and, worse, sentiments would be irrelevant[32]. On the contrary, Sen considers that politics needs some romance because the pursuit of justice, or more modestly the will to reduce injustice in the world, requires a combination of indignation and reasoning. His interest for Mary Wollstonecraft's fight for the rights of women and other deprived groups of people in the eighteenth century is very characteristic of this view:

> The role and reach of reason are not undermined by the indignation that leads us to an investigation of the ideas underlying the nature and basis of the persistent inequalities [...] While Wollstonecraft is quite remarkable in combining wrath and reasoning in the same work (indeed, alongside each other), even pure expressions of discontent or disappointment can make their own contributions to public reasoning if they are followed by investigation (perhaps undertaken by others) of whatever reasonable basis there might be for the indignation.[33]

democracy, ethics and justice

Naivety is not always where one might think it is and, sometimes, reality takes its revenge for being so badly seized. Democracy, ethics and justice cannot be a mere question of individual utility or rationality. Collective rules or norms are necessary in the world we live in, not only because they are useful for the satisfaction of individual preferences or for mutually profitable cooperation.

The social contract tradition has, according to Sen, such serious limitations in providing an underpinning for a theory of justice that it ultimately serves as a barrier to practical reason on matters of justice. In contrast, his social choice approach is, in its deepest ambitions, incomplete so that it forbids any doctrinal closure. And for good reason: it is influenced by a political philosophy of deliberation, a moral philosophy based on needs and an empirical approach of social and economic facts. In other words, Sen denies the possibility for an issue to be totally and definitively understood and the idea of a policy that could make the future fully mastered. But he believes that we have to acknowledge our human aptitudes for reason, argue, sympathize and cooperate to strengthen the general pursuit of justice. INDIGO

1) Sen A. K. (1999b), "Democracy as a Universal Value", *Journal of Democracy*, July, 10 (3), p. 3.

2) Arrow K. J. (1950), "A Difficulty in the Concept of Social Welfare", *Journal of Political Economy*, August, Vol. 58, N° 4, pp. 328-46.

3) Swedberg R. (1990), "Amartya Sen", *in* Swedberg R., *Economics and Sociology: Redefining their Boundaries – Conversations with Economists and Sociologists*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, p. 254.

4) Sen A. K. (1999a), "Autobiography", *The Nobel Prizes 1998*, Tore Frängsmyr, Nobel Foundation, Stockholm, http://www.nobel.se/economics/laureates/1998/sen-autobio.html, p. 6.

5) Sen A. K. (1989), "Economic Methodology: Heterogeneity and Relevance", *Social Research*, 56 (2), p. 315.

6) Rawls J (1971), *A Theory of Justice*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

7) To simplify matters, let's say that the foundation of welfare economics on classical utilitarianism and its concern for the maximization of total utility had been severely undermined by the influence of positivism in the Thirties. Lionel Robbins' proposition (1938, p. 637) particularly made economists consider interpersonal utility comparisons as non-scientific: "every mind is inscrutable to every other mind and no common denominator of feeling is possible". Unsurprisingly then economists turned to Vilfredo Pareto's notion of optimum (1929, p. 636): Optimum is reached when it is no more possible to increase one individual's well-being without, at the same time, decreasing another one's.

8) Sen A.K. (1980), "Equality of What?", *in* McMurrin (ed.), *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, vol. 1, S. Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press et Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 218-219.

9) Rawls J. (1993), *Political liberalism*, New York: Colombia University Press, p. 146.

10) Arrow, *Op. Cit.*, p. 342.

11) Sen A. K. (1999a), p. 351.

12) Desai M., (2000), "Portrait: Amartya Sen", Prospect *Magazine*, 54, July, http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=3643, p. 2.

13) Until independence and the partition of India on August 15, 1947, violent confrontations took place between Hindus and Moslems despite Gandhi's efforts to build a friendship between these religious communities. A specific episode shocked the young Sen. While he was still living in Dhaka, in a largely Hindu area, a Muslim daily labourer came through the gate screaming pitifully and bleeding profusely, after being knifed on the street by some communal thugs. It is a story that he has often retold since the 1990s: see for example Sen (1999a, p. 2); Barsamian (2001, pp. 4-5). In fact, the partition of India did not resolve at all the problem of religious violence, which still remains today.

14) Nozick R. (1974), *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, Oxford, Blackwell.

15) Sen A. K. (2009), *The Idea of Justice*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, p. 411.

16) Sen A. K., *Op. Cit.*, p. 20.

17) See Barsamian D. (2001), "Reflections of an economist", Alternative Radio, USA, http://indiatogether.org/interviews/sen.htm, p. 13.

18) Dasgupta was teacher of Economics at Dakha University for twenty year, from 1926 to 1946. Except a brief passing through London School of Economics, during 1934-1936, to earn a PhD, working with Lionel Robbins, and a Visiting Fellowship at the University of Cambridge in 1963-64, Dasgupta was firmly based in India that prevent him to receive any real recognition abroad. Nevertheless, he was considered in his country as "the economists' economist". Sen has never been taught by him, but as Dasgupta was a close family friend, he is the one who introduced him to economics. See Swedberg (1990, p. 251).

19) Sen A. K. (1981), (1981), *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Depravation*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

20) See Swedberg (1990, pp. 251-252).

21) Merleau-Ponty Maurice (2000), *Les Aventures de la dialectique*, Gallimard, Folio Essais.

22) See Barsamian (2001, p. 5).

23) *Ibid.*, p. 6.

24) *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

25) *Ibid.*, p. 2.

26) This is an excerpt from a letter that Tagore wrote to a friend and it is certainly the most quoted by Sen. See for instance Sen (2001), "Tagore and his India", *The New York Review*, August, 28, http://www.nobel.se/literature/articles/sen/index.html.

27) Sen A. K. (2009), p. 50.

28) Sen A. K. (2009), p. 125.

29) *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

30) Rothschild E. (2001), *Economic Sentiments. Adam Smith, Condorcet and the Enlightenment*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, p. 9.

31) Sen A. K. (2009), p. vii.

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